



**SASKATCHEWAN
CRAFT COUNCIL**

**A Year We'll Remember
April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021
Annual Report**

A NOTE ABOUT OUR ANNUAL REPORT

As you read through this year's report you will notice that it is devoid of photographs and design elements.

It's been that kind of year.

We had two major design projects to tackle recently – the *Dimensions 2021* catalogue, and our annual report. Due to several challenges, we chose to put our efforts into the catalogue. It's a beautiful piece, and we hope you stop by the gallery to secure yourself a copy or request a copy to be sent to you.

The content of this annual report is full of details and descriptions of programs. However, we just didn't have the capacity to publish a report to our usual standards.

Please review the document; it will equip you with the information that you require to participate in our upcoming AGM.

I hope this is the end of our major challenges.

Thank you for your understanding.

Kindest regards,

Carmen Milenkovic, Executive Director

THE LAND ON WHICH WE GATHER AND CREATE

The Saskatchewan Craft Council acknowledges that in Saskatchewan, we are on treaty land. It is important that we recognize that we all have benefits and responsibilities under these agreements. We must acknowledge the harms and injustices of the past and present. We must dedicate our efforts to working together in a spirit of collaboration and reconciliation.

In Saskatchewan, we are all treaty people, and reside on the lands of Treaties 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, and 10. These lands are the traditional territories of numerous First Nations, including Plains and Woods Cree, Saulteaux, Nakota, Dakota, Lakota, Stoney, and Dene, the homeland of the Métis Nation. We have the opportunity to help realize the treaty promises made with Indigenous peoples, to honour the past and the future through traditional and cultural values such as identity, kinship, language and ceremony.

Acknowledging traditional territory and this relationship is only one of many steps we can take to recognize the land's history, to pay respects to the Indigenous peoples whose practices and spiritualities continue to develop, grow, and contribute to this land.

MISSION

Saskatchewan Craft Council invites and connects the world to experience excellence in Saskatchewan craft.

I believe that fine craft has the unique ability to influence our mood and emotions as the artisanship enriches ordinary objects that we surround ourselves with purpose and beauty. The unique handmade pieces that I have chosen will allow me to celebrate local artistry in my own home everyday... These particular pieces from Akiko Muromura, Art Affection Pottery and The Clay People will make an exciting addition in sharing meals and the enjoyment of others' company for years to come.

Winner, WinterGreen Shopping Spree

STRATEGIC GOALS

SERVICE

The SCC fosters an environment where excellence in craft is nurtured, recognized, and valued.

ENGAGEMENT

The SCC supports Saskatchewan craftspeople to flourish creatively and economically.

DIVERSITY

The SCC actively engages with and builds programming to reflect Saskatchewan's Indigenous, newcomer and diverse communities.

COMMUNICATION

The SCC communicates a strong brand that clearly identifies it as the trusted source that invites and connects the world to experience excellence in Saskatchewan craft.

CAPACITY

The SCC has the organizational capacity to deliver innovative and quality needs-based programming.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Greetings Saskatchewan Craft Council Members

Looking back through the past year in this COVID-19 epoch, time seems to be picking up speed again. With vaccines flooding the province, we have hope for some return to public events, possibly even eating and mingling together at a craft opening or Art Now. It is still difficult to plan and make decisions for events in the future, so thank you for your patience and understanding as we navigate these new times together.

From the Board perspective, we are finally in gear again after a much-delayed audit and late AGM. Work that was derailed by COVID is gradually getting back on the agenda. Zoom has increased our flexibility to have meetings without being on the road and freeing up that time is a bonus for board members. I am not sure that Carmen and other staff feel that another meeting, usually in the evening after a long working day, has everyone at their best, but if we take small bites, we will start to make headway.

Thank you to Craft Council members who attended our first AGM on Zoom. Although we may feel like the cast of the Muppet Show seeing our faces across the screen, it is the new normal and our staff are becoming experts in navigating and responding. It is also an opportunity for members from across the province to participate without adding travel time. We are proposing some tweaks to the bylaws to make the audit process less time compressed and member access to audit information align with the Non-Profits Incorporation Act.

Our funding partners have been flexible and generous throughout this past year. We are still sorting what dollars can be spent where for what programs that may have been suspended or totally revamped due to the COVID effect. Federal, provincial and the City of Saskatoon support has helped us manage through these uncertain times. If you have an opportunity, please show your appreciation to your city or provincial government and continue to lobby for the creative sector. Our provincial funding body, Creative Saskatchewan, has not had an increase in many years, so with inflation, their funding capacity is reduced. All governments will be grappling with difficult budgets for years to come.

We are working on identifying and removing barriers to diversity in our organization through partnership with other creative industries. The membership committee had done a review of our fees and membership classifications when COVID-19 hit. Its impact took care of any thoughts we may have had about raising fees. We continue to look for ways to connect with our membership to help you build economic and creative excellence going forward.

As your new Canadian Crafts Federation member, I want you to know that Saskatchewan is a respected and valued contributor. Our Executive Director, Carmen Milenkovic, is always looking for ways to build our capacity. She arranged for the Craft Alliance Atlantic to bring us the knowledge that organization has gleaned about

exporting and showing in the United States and in other countries. This was supported by the Western Diversification Fund and Creative Saskatchewan and allowed all craft councils from western Canada to participate. A pilot project that the Quebec Craft Council ran last year with Simons, a major department store retailer for online shopping, has resulted in this being rolled out across Canada for this Christmas shopping season. Partnerships and collaborations resulting in success for our members encourages government to back more opportunities.

Thank you for filling out questionnaires; for trusting your work with us in the boutique and the gallery. Thank you for your donations and support; for cheerleading and sharing media posts from your fellow creatives. Please express your appreciation to our hard-working staff and give them your feedback on what you need to be successful, or some barriers that we can't see because it has been part of the organization for so long.

Thank you to Vivian Orr for her many years of dedication to the SCC. We wish you and Rod a great retirement in Montreal. Finally, a thank you to Jason Peters for finishing your term on the board. We wish you continued success as you build your business.

Here's hoping we can see each other in person and on Zoom soon.

*All the best,
Cindy Hoppe, SCC Board Chairperson*

I just wanted to say how impressed I was by the many and varied steps you are taking to respond to the current situation and to improve the reach of the boutique and expand the customer base.

Kind regards, SCC member

REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

I don't have to tell you that it was quite a year. Amidst juggling a pandemic, the Saskatchewan Craft Council turned inside-out as we tried to understand the impact of COVID-19, its variants, and the resulting health orders. It all started just days following an exciting and vibrant conference, which we hosted on behalf of the Canadian Crafts Federation. As we wrapped up the final session of that gathering, it became clear that a giant boulder was rolling our way, covering every crevasse, and blocking every avenue of escape. Our conference ended on Sunday, March 8. Days later, on Thursday March 12, the JUNOS celebration week in Saskatoon was cancelled, and everything turned grim.

We didn't know how to respond. Everything shut down. Everyone shut down. Our exhibitions team had just started show change. *Alchemy* was to be a tribute to master printmaker, Nik Semenoff. We paused the mounting of Nik's exhibition, as we were uncertain how to handle it, and if anyone could even see it. We were told to lock our doors. Our staff gathered in our gallery space, sitting as far apart as possible. We decided to use the brief shutdown (little did we know it would last months) to digest the insights we developed in the conference. We still have that flip chart full of notes.

It was during this time that our exploration of computer platforms began. There are many platforms out there, and we uncovered our fair share. First of all, we had to figure out how to connect to our work computers from home. The answer Real VCN. Then, once we had completed the mounting of Nik's show, we had to figure out how people could see it even with our doors shuttered. Enter Facebook and Instagram. It wasn't long before Zoom became part of our daily vernacular as we tried desperately to stay in touch with each other and our members. With each new challenge, we sought out a new online remedy or perfected an old one. Suddenly, we couldn't live without Slack. Our YouTube channel became indispensable. Cameras, microphones, and ear buds became commonplace. Maia perfected our use of JotForm as a platform we now use regularly for applications, contracts, and other administrative functions. We thought this was the perfect time to really develop our online shop. Enter Shopify, digital photography, and a refresh of our website. Some platforms were better than others. Art Now was online, and while we sold some work, the experience wasn't like the in-person event. WinterGreen on MarketSpace was dismal as was the online platform developed by the Toronto Gift Fair. Zoom was used effectively to deliver professional practices programs, and other kinds of workshops. Air Table worked well for our curatorial committee – so well in fact that we saw it as an answer to online jurying for Dimensions 2021.

In June 2020, our doors were opened along with other retail shops on Broadway. We introduced regular sanitization, plexiglass dividers, hand sanitizers, face masks and contact tracing. We regularly met as a staff and board (online) to review health directives and the impact on our programming. Our staff worked hard at expanding our boutique, both online and inside the SCC. We continued mounting exhibitions, introducing bubble tours, and reduced hours.

We were faced with other challenges. After repeated delays in our 2019-2020 audit, it became apparent that we needed a new firm to review our financials. After a full RFP process, we contracted Virtus Group, and worked with their team to present the financial statements contained in this report. We managed to have a successful holiday season, with strong sales, which meant that we could pass revenue on to you.

Staffing the SCC had its own challenges as we had to bring in additional people to help us with keeping the gallery and boutique open and creating our Shopify store. All of this was done while we celebrated the birth of three babies and replaced two staff who were away on extended sick leaves.

On the very last day of this fiscal year, we said adieu to Vivian Orr, the long-serving graphic artist and idea generator. We'll miss her fast turnaround time, her creative mind, and her willingness to be your champion. Montreal is getting a power couple in Rod and Vivian.

I've been here for almost seven years. During that time there has never been a year like this one. We are exhausted with the double trajectory that we've been forced to explore. Delivering programs has never been harder. We'll keep some of our new ways, and anxiously await the return to some of our old ways. It was also a year where we collaborated. We continued our digital strategy work through the CCF. I participated on the advocacy committee of the Greater Saskatoon Chamber of Commerce bringing issues of the arts community to the attention of the chamber's board. We worked with Craft Alliance Atlantic and SaskGalleries to deliver programming.

I want to thank the members of our team – both staff and board members. You jumped in and were willing to try, try and try. We can't get too comfortable. It's not over yet.

*Carmen Milenkovic,
Executive Director*

**Enjoying the [Instagram] posts with
interesting craft words [Craft Lingo Series].
Great idea.**

SCC Member

REPORT FROM EXHIBITIONS AND EDUCATION

Although 2020 was far from what we expected, we have had many successes to celebrate. When we closed our doors in March, we could not have predicted the long-term impact COVID-19 would have on our programming. Despite the challenges involved with work from home arrangements, scheduling changes and event cancellations, we have made necessary adjustments to our operations that will remain beneficial in the long term. Our new online contracts and forms, despite a significant learning curve, have simplified these procedures drastically. Our online artist talks and events have expanded our reach across Saskatchewan and even internationally. Higher staffing demands in our gallery space have provided valuable opportunities to connect with the public. It has been a difficult year for all of us, but we remain dedicated to the important work that we do and will continue to provide opportunity and support to Saskatchewan craftspeople.

This year saw lots of staffing changes for Exhibitions as well. Steph welcomed her second child and took a year of maternity leave. Leah moved into the temporary Exhibitions Coordinator position, and we welcomed two new Gallery Assistants, Alix Gowan and Jean Price. Both Alix and Jean have worked in numerous capacities in the organization this year as we adjusted and responded to COVID-19.

CURATORIAL COMMITTEE SELECTIONS

The SCC Curatorial Committee acts as an advisory committee to the Exhibitions and Education Coordinators. We are grateful to the members of this committee for sharing their time and knowledge, and to the previous curatorial committees who have assisted the Saskatchewan Craft Council. Their voice and expertise are invaluable not only when discussing applications, but regarding questions of representation and encouraging artists at all levels. Like all other aspects of our programming this year, our Exhibitions proposal process and curatorial committee meeting moved to a virtual format in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, using Jotform and Airtable as well as Zoom. We are grateful to the following committee members for their flexibility during this new online process: Joseph Anderson, Katherine Boyer, Paula Cooley, Dale Lowe, and Melanie Monique Rose.

We received 14 applications this year, which included 10 Saskatchewan-based artists, four out-of-province artists, seven self-declared emerging artists, one self-declared Canadian newcomer artist, and nine current SCC members. Eight of these applications were for solo exhibitions and six were group exhibitions (three artists or more). These applications included two ceramic media, four textiles, three glass, and five mixed media. The selected exhibitions include three Saskatchewan exhibitions and two out-of-province exhibitions. We are grateful to our curatorial committee for reviewing every application thoroughly - the discussion about every application was active and considerate. Thank you for your generosity of spirit and conversation.

GALLERY EXHIBITIONS, APRIL 2020 – MARCH 2021

***Alchemy*, Artist: Nik Semenoff; March 21 – June 20, 2020,
Attendees: exhibition: 2,348; virtual curators talk: 54**

It was an honour to present *Alchemy*, a retrospective exhibition of the rarely seen prints by Nik Semenoff. Stephanie and Maia worked with local printmaker Paul Constable to curate this exhibition of Semenoff's personal collection, as well as showcasing materials and descriptions of his educational contributions. During Semenoff's career, he advocated for health and safety with a high regard for science, Semenoff introduced eco-friendly and non-toxic processes to the printmaker's studio. Through innovation and experimentation, Semenoff refined and revolutionized the methodology and tools for higher quality printmaking – now a world standard. This exhibition featured Paul Constable in our very first virtual talk and saw good attendance despite having to change the exhibition's schedule as a result of pandemic stipulations.

***From Scratch*, Artists: Melody Armstrong, Paula Cooley, Cec Cote, Toby Cote, Jane Evans, Jenny-Lyn Fife, Treesa Marie Gagne, Jude Haraldson, Zach Hauser, Cindy Hoppe, June Jacobs, Kristina Komendant, Lorraine Long, Morley Maier, Monique Martin, Claude Morin, Paige Mortensen, Kathleen O'Grady, Kara Perpelitz, Angel Weber; August 13 – November 6, 2020**

Attendees: exhibition: 3,146; virtual artist talk with Paula Cooley and Paige Mortensen: 43; virtual artist talk with Kathleen O'Grady: 29

From Scratch showcased the work of 19 SCC juried professional craftspeople working in a variety of craft media. Curated by Stephanie and Maia, this was the first time in five years that the SCC hosted a group exhibition by our members. To make something "from scratch" is a phrase originally referring to the line scratched in the ground from where competitors began a race. To make something "from scratch" these days, is to make something from nothing. Using foundational materials to make something new continues to be a critical component of craft, however, the advent of various tools and the blurred line between craft and art have introduced new conceptual frameworks to this tradition. *From Scratch* considered the wide variety and complexity of technique and intent that exists in our contemporary craft world. Making from scratch will always be valued; but in an increasingly complex world, what else can we make and how can we make it?

Woven Woods: A Journey Through the Forest Floor,

Artist: Lorraine Roy; November 14, 2020 – January 9, 2021

Attendees: exhibition: 3,214; virtual artist talk: 92; school tour 5

This exhibition of art quilts by Ontario artist Lorraine Roy entitled *Woven Woods: A Journey Through the Forest Floor* brought much needed vibrancy to the gallery during the winter months. Scientist-turned-artist Lorraine Roy completed an Honours B.Sc. in horticultural science before moving to a career in art textiles. Inspired by the research of Dr. Suzanne Simard, a UBC professor of forest ecology, *Woven Woods* explored the complex relationship between art, science, and nature. Taking an intricate look at what lies beneath the surface of the forest floor, Roy reveals the biology, mythology, and symbolism of trees, including the way they communicate with each other and the world above. A Talking Craft artist talk with Lorraine Roy hosted 92 attendees from all over Canada, as well as parts of the United States, South Asia, and Europe.

I just want to take this opportunity to thank you so much for one of my best gallery experiences yet. You were approachable and professional all the way through. I also loved the opportunity to do a Zoom talk in place of the real thing. It has been a great pleasure working with you!

Lorraine Roy, Gallery Exhibitor, Woven Woods

Square Dance, Artist: Cathryn Miller; January 16 – March 6, 2021

Attendees: exhibition: 2,500; virtual artist talk 50

SCC member Cathryn Miller presented our fourth exhibition of the year, *Square Dance*. This intricate and extraordinary exhibition, created solely of paper, relied on textile tradition to reinterpret, and expand on how memory is held and shared. In their artist statement, Cathryn describes their interest for unusual ways of sharing memories and communicating — such as infographics, cryptography, and the artist's own personal iconography that takes the place of traditional words and pictures. Cathryn's paper and book works have won multiple accolades and awards. They have won the Premier's Prize for the Outstanding Entry three times at Dimensions, the SCC's biannual touring juried exhibition.

A Flavorlicious World, Artist: Magali Thibault Gobeil;
March 13 – May 8, 2021
Attendees: exhibition-2,020; virtual artist talk: 16

An exhibition of spontaneity and wonder by Montreal artist Magali Thibault Gobeil welcomed spring in the SCC Gallery. An enticing collection of both wearable and sculptural works, *A Flavorlicious World* was anything but ordinary. Presenting two distinct bodies of work, the exhibition is a playful exploration of materials, including precious metal and colourful synthetics. Magali's expertise with resins and plexiglass, combined with her tireless exploration, has led this award-winning artist to be exhibited nationally and internationally.

Stephanie Canning, Leah Moxley Teigrob, Maia Stark
Exhibition and Education Coordinators

FINE CRAFT BOUTIQUE REPORT

NEW BOUTIQUE STAFF – JEAN PRICE AND ALIX GOWAN

Jean Price and Alix Gowan joined the Boutique staff team. Both replaced Kaitlyn while she's on maternity leave -Jean working in the Boutique and Alix on our special project, the online store. Both bring an abundance of skills and knowledge to our organization. They started out as Gallery Assistants, worked one day in March at our last reception (during the CCF conference) and then were casualties of the lockdown. We brought them back in June 2020 to help us through the impact of COVID-19.

STAGED RE-OPENING OF FINE CRAFT BOUTIQUE

After a 12-week lockdown our retail space re-opened, with reduced hours Monday to Friday, to facilitate private bubble shopping. We created a safe shopping environment by limiting visitors into the space and adhering to public health COVID-19 recommendations for retail operations. Saturday shopping resumed in early September.

NEW WAYS TO SHOP FINE CRAFT

In August 2020 we launched a new more robust Online Fine Craft shop. Members work now reach national and international markets. We have seen Saskatchewan fine craft shipped in Canada from coast to coast, to several US states, and to France. During this year, an important feature of the online store proved to be curbside pick-up. We noticed a shift in customer buying patterns from in-gallery shopping to online shopping with delivery or pick-up options. Twenty-six percent of boutique sales were conducted online. Customers are increasingly browsing inventory online before visiting our brick-and-mortar shop to make their purchase.

STAFF EDUCATION

Craft Council staff from across Canada met online for a retail peer to peer discussion and in workshops with Craft Alliance Atlantic on the ways and means of exporting fine craft.

RETAIL SALES REPORT

Our brick-and-mortar shop sales were greatly augmented by our online shop this year. Online purchases made up 26% of total boutique sales. We saw an increase in online sales by 3700% over 2019/20. Gross sales from the gallery were \$12,377, while the boutique (including the online store) saw \$79,067 in sales. While both areas were down in gross sales, the Christmas season was stronger than Christmas 2019.

I just had a look at the new online gallery store. All I can say is WOW! I know things are just getting [loaded] in but it is so impressive. What a lot of work and what a great job! Please pass along my congratulations and appreciation! I will definitely be sharing this through my social media (and doing some shopping myself).

SCC member

*Lesley Sutherland and Jean Price,
Boutique and Administration Coordinators*

REPORT FROM MEMBER SERVICES

THE SCC ANNUAL JURY SESSIONS took place on Zoom throughout April - July. Thirteen successful applicants and 12 jurors took part in this year's sessions. All successful applicants will be able to take part in future WinterGreen markets, and SCC programming such as Art Now, and may apply to the SCC boutique and online store. Becoming juried is a positive experience whether you are accepted or not. It is a great way to receive honest and helpful feedback on work that is sometimes made in isolation. I love to see the participants enjoying the process, getting to know the faces behind the work, and making long lasting connections with one another in the arts community.

THE FIFTH ANNUAL ART NOW FINE ART FAIR took place online, September 17-26. The SCC showcased 55 pieces of original contemporary craft and artworks. Eight works were sold this year. Total sales of SCC members before tax were \$6,455; this was down from \$12,573 in 2019. During the event the SCC homepage received 1,975 views. There were 17 exhibiting galleries from Saskatchewan. We came together to show a selection of quality craft and fine art throughout the ten days. The Saskatchewan Craft Council featured 34 artists online as well as on location at the SCC Gallery and Boutique. As always, this year's selection was beautifully curated, showcasing a wide range of works.

Mary Lynn Podiluk and Ruth Langwieser each gave a studio tour and discussed their unique processes and upcoming projects. These online presentations received 192 views combined. Shane Junop and Monique Martin participated in Art in Focus, a page dedicated to artwork made during the COVID-19 pandemic. Shane Junop also participated in a panel discussion on making art during the shutdown.

Like so many other programs, **WINTERGREEN FINE CRAFT MARKET** became an online event with extended dates, Nov 16 – Dec 12, 2020. It featured the works of 53 artists from across Saskatchewan, showcasing a variety of art media including woodworking, sculpture, jewellery, ceramics, photography, printmaking, painting, and textiles. We chose MarketSpace, a Canadian e-commerce platform, as the delivery mechanism.

We ran a successful giveaway during our WinterGreen promotion. The prize was a \$250 shopping spree (plus shipping) at WinterGreen and a \$100 gift card to art and design store, Alt Haus. During the time this giveaway contest was open (November 30-December 7), our Instagram account received 279 new followers. The post itself received 172 likes and 180 comments.

Fifty marketers took part in WinterGreen Online Market over the six weeks. The link to WinterGreen was clicked 3,837 times, with 3,133 of those unique clicks. 217 sales were made totaling \$21,121. In 2019 we had 3,222 attendees to the in-person market with 70 marketers having sales totaling \$155,700. Because each vendor had their own shopping

cart, customers were frustrated with the process and with entering their credit card information each time they made a purchase.

WHOLESALE PROGRAM - TORONTO HOME AND GIFT VIRTUAL FAIR

enabled retail outlets from across the country to meet suppliers of wholesale product. The artists that continued the TGF programme were Wendy Parsons and Zach Dietrich of Parsons Dietrich Pottery, Gwen Fehr of Joan's Beeswax Candles, and Susan Robertson of Susan Robertson Pottery. Like WinterGreen, this online experience was less than satisfying. While it reduced travel costs, the engagement with retail purchasing agents was minimal. The Saskatchewan Craft Council is considering putting our members forward to attend a TGF 365, so that their products can be sold throughout the year online. The SCC aims to participate in the in-person gift fair in 2022.

CANCELLATIONS

Unfortunately, many initiatives were cancelled such as the Salon des métier d'art de Montréal and our international explorations. Hopefully, we'll return to those in the coming year.

It was so nice talking to [Alexa Hainsworth] today! I should make a point of doing it more often. You've been such a huge supporter of me and I really can't tell you how much I appreciate that. I always feel really inspired after talking to you!

Thanks, SCC member

*Alexa Hainsworth,
Member Services Coordinator*

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES REPORT

Led by Michael Peterson and Laura Helgert, the SCC Professional Practices program continued to be popular and instructive. At the heart of the course was the desire to support professional and emerging craftspeople with tools to ready them and improve their engagement with the marketplace. Built upon the success of previous years, the program's design concentrated on real-life issues that the participants were encountering. With the shadow of COVID-19 blanketing the marketplace, it was an opportunity to delve into marketing practices. Given the challenging times, the SCC offered this program at no cost to subscribers. We thank Creative Saskatchewan for making this possible.

GENERAL OVERVIEW

Participants responded that the bi-weekly sessions and the external presenters brought in (EY Canada, Katrina German, Little Ox Film Company) were more relevant and tailored to their needs than last year's sessions. They felt the external presenters had a better concept of the size of their businesses and discussed approaches at a level they could implement.

With the primary focus of these sessions being how to pivot and maintain sales and a presence during the COVID-19 pandemic, we focused these sessions on online sales, e-commerce, marketing, and photography. Based on feedback from past sessions and where we saw participants most strongly engage, in addition to offering strategic advice in areas such as marketing, we provided specific advice on how to implement these strategies as well as how to use associated programs (such as Shopify and Instagram).

Over the course of two sessions, we detailed a step-by-step how-to set-up a Shopify store, connect it to social media, and tag products for sale directly on Instagram and Facebook. We then brought in Katrina German to discuss her Action Tracking approach to developing and testing online marketing campaigns. Following these sessions, six participants set-up their own Shopify stores, while a few others started trials. We heard from those who set-up these shops that they appreciated having the recorded sessions as a reference. A number also booked individual consultations to ask questions about specific technical details and to receive feedback on their site set-up.

Michael Peterson and Laura Helgert
Professional Practices Coordinators

OUTCOMES

- Six participants started new Shopify stores.
- Six participants took advantage of EY consultations to receive financial advice.
- Nine participants became members of Women Entrepreneurs of Saskatchewan.
- One participant was successful in accessing a SK Arts Microgrant.
- Two participants are now being carried by the Winnipeg Art Gallery's shop.
- Michael and Laura also engaged in eleven one-on-one consultations with program participants covering topics such as marketing strategies and branding, grant writing, and strategic planning.
- Executive Director, Carmen Milenkovic, also provided one-on-one consultations covering insurance, marketing and definition of program needs.

CANADIAN CRAFTS FEDERATION REPORT

As a new member to the CCF board, it has been many Zoom meetings as the CCF works on its digital strategy project, funded through the Canada Council for the Arts. The project has multiple phases with the first one being research based. Surveys were methodically developed for makers and consumers. These were released this spring. The findings from these questionnaires will help develop strategies to address the issues identified and focus our efforts as craft councils supporting our memberships going forward. Along with this effort, examining the issues in craft education was another focus group. Many colleges offering craft education were forced online this year with COVID-19, a challenging result for hands-on based learning environments. The implications for this sector are huge and not well understood.

The CCF reworked its website this year as well and is inviting the membership to give it a look.

The CCF has taken on the leadership for North America in the World Craft Federation. There is optimism that this change in leadership will get the NA Craft sector working more collaboratively.

A partnership with major retailer Simons this year came about through a pilot project with the Quebec Craft Council and has been extended across Canada. Approximately 100 artisans from across Canada will be part of Simon's online shop, Fabrique 1840.

As mentioned before, the connections forged at the CCF table were instrumental in inviting the Craft Alliance Atlantic to give us three information-packed workshops on everything we need to know about exporting to the United States. Thank you to Creative Saskatchewan for funding these initiatives.

I hope these opportunities will continue to spark creative marketing and successful shows for our members down the road.

*Cindy Hoppe,
SCC Representative to the Canadian Crafts Federation*

AT A GLANCE – THE YEAR IN REVIEW

SUPPORTING CREATIVITY AND ECONOMIC SUCCESS

- 15,248 visitors came to our gallery. That is 63% of the previous year's attendance.
- This year, due to the shut down, the SCC Gallery featured five exhibitions instead of the usual six. Artists who participated came from Saskatoon, Regina, Biggar, Meacham, Yorkton, Moose Jaw, Grasswood, Montreal, Grandora, Blaine Lake, Balgonie, and Dundas, ON.
- \$77,320 was paid to artists in commission payments, and fees; in addition, we underwrote participation in many of our programs. This is 62% of the money paid out in the previous year, which reflects the impact of the shutdown and reduced sales due to COVID-19.
- Members also benefitted from no fees for professional practices, photography for WinterGreen, and no shipping costs for out of town participants in programs.
- The number of artists participating in our boutique store grew to 91. We featured 2,581 pieces with a total retail value of \$228,145.
- Professional Practices and one-on-one consultations continued to inspire and develop business skills in our members.

FACEBOOK – SHIFTING TO A YOUNGER, INTERNATIONAL AUDIENCE

- Total page followers as of March 31, 2021 – 3,901, an 8% increase over the previous year.
- Our Facebook followers are spread evenly from 25-65+. This is an impressive spread and speaks to the range of content that we share.
- The top cities that are represented by our followers are: Saskatoon, Regina, Prince Albert, Calgary, Moose Jaw, Toronto, Yorkton, Edmonton, North Battleford, and Winnipeg.
- The top countries that are represented by followers include Canada, United States, India, Australia, Pakistan, United Kingdom, Bangladesh, Brazil, France, and Mexico.

INSTAGRAM & TWITTER

- Craft works well on Instagram given the emphasis on photography.
- Total followers as of March 31, 2021 – 4,108 a 33% increase over the previous year.
- We have put most of our social media efforts into Instagram this past year.
- Most of our followers on Instagram are between 25 and 44 and are women.
 - The top cities that are represented by our followers are Saskatoon, Regina, Toronto, Calgary, and Winnipeg.
- The top countries that are represented by followers are Canada, United States, India, United Kingdom, and Australia.
- We don't use Twitter very often, as it doesn't seem to be the best vehicle for promotion of craft.

SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERTISING

- Our paid reach, as of March 31, 2021, is 185,855.
- Our Facebook page reach is 249,742 (up 37%), with Instagram's reach at 45,251.
- The highest reach surrounds WinterGreen and the end of May.
- We are still learning about online advertising. In the past year we spent \$1,899 on campaigns generating 538,000 impressions with a reach to 185,900 people.
- Art Now was our most successful campaign. We spent \$90 between Facebook and Instagram and reached 10,000 people, almost entirely women. Most of them were with the 35-44 age brackets, with 25-34 as the next viewership.
- A \$300 WinterGreen campaign saw 36,680 people with the largest group being women aged 25-34.
- Our call for our exhibition program saw a new record of 36 applicants, which can be attributed to the online ad campaign.

WEBSITE

- 33,128 users visited our website this year – down 2.86% from the previous year. Our page views increased by 2.42%, and our pages/session increased by 5.36%.
- Users from Saskatoon increased by 26.43%, while users from Regina decreased by 17%.
- Top page visits:
 - Homepage – Increase of 48.58%
 - WinterGreen – Decrease of 23.54%
 - Fine Craft Boutique – Increase of 85.07%
 - Member Directory – Increase of 29.74%
- Most of our visitors are women (65.3%), aged 25-34
- Referrals from other internet sources include:
 - Google
 - Facebook
 - Bing
 - Leahdorion.ca
- Devices used to access our site:
 - Desktop – 49.5%
 - Mobile – 44.52%
 - Tablet – 5.97%

ONLINE STORE

- Through our programming fund from Creative Saskatchewan, we created an online Shopify store.
- The store went live in September 2020. By the end of March 2021, we had processed 133 orders for total gross sales of \$20,886. November and December were our busiest months.
- Our top selling artists (by number of pieces) were Leah Dorion (visual art), Craig Campbell (metal), Susan Robertson (ceramics), Bonny Houston (glass) and Zach Hauser (wood).
- Most of the traffic to our online store is coming from our website, but we are also getting many visitors from our social media.

- Most visitors came from Canada (5,502) with others from United States (1,166), Ireland, Philippines, United Kingdom and China. Additional visitors came from Israel, South Korea, Mexico, Thailand, India, Japan, Australia, Netherlands, and South Africa.

TALKING CRAFT AND SASKCREATE

- SaskCreate is our primary communication vehicle with our members.
- 331 subscribers, a 7% decrease over the previous year. We have become more systematic in no longer sending this membership perk to non-members.
- 82% of our readers are highly engaged, 10% are moderately engaged and 7% are rarely engaged.
- Talking Craft is a communication with our customers and supporters.
- Talking Craft has over 1,520 subscribers, on par with the previous year.
- 45% of our readers are highly engaged, 13% are moderately engaged and 41% are rarely engaged. Most of our events were virtual during this year.
- Both newsletters are bi-weekly.
- We are hoping that our online shop changes will help boost the Talking Craft readership in the coming year.

BLOG POSTS

We're finding that not many viewers are reading our blog posts. In the coming year we are going to put more emphasis or promotion of the content. We know the topics are of interest; it could just be that there was too much to read during the pandemic.

The blogs posted through our website didn't attract as many viewers as those posted through our Shopify store.

Blogs through the website:

- Tales from the Last Pandemic – 1 view
- The Magic of Indigo – 4 views
- The Backstory on Something Brewing – 4 views

Blogs through our online store:

- Weaving Cultural Identities – 17 views
- The Magic of Indigo – 15 views
- The Backstory on Something Brewing – 13 views
- Understanding the Facebook Algorithm – 21 views
- Streaming on Twitch – 24 views
- Collect 2020 -14 views

Report compiled by Sydney Luther, Alix Gowan, Jean Price, Lesley Sutherland and Carmen Milenkovic

SCC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Cindy Hoppe, Biggar

Chairperson (exp 2021)
Canadian Crafts Federation Representative
(*Ex officio*, all committees)

Jason Peters, Vanscoy

Vice-Chairperson (exp 2021)
(Executive, Audit)

Lori Steward, Saskatoon

Secretary (exp 2022)
(Executive, Governance)

Andrew Wiebe, Swift Current

Audit Committee, Chairperson
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Terri Eckvall, Regina

Governance Committee, Chairperson
(exp 2022)

Lee Halford, Regina

Membership Committee
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Janet Ng, Regina

Membership Committee
(exp 2023)

Lenneke Verweij, Saskatoon

Membership Committee
(exp 2021)

Brenda Wolf, Regina

Membership Committee, Chairperson
(exp 2022)

2020-21 CURATORIAL COMMITTEE

Joseph Anderson
Katherine Boyer
Paula Cooley
Dale Lowe
Melanie Monique Rose

SCC STAFF

Carmen Milenkovic

- Executive Director

Lesley Sutherland

- Boutique/Gallery Coordinator (Job-Share)
- Temporary Bookkeeping Services, January-March 2021

Kaitlyn Frolek

- Boutique/Gallery Coordinator (Job-Share)
- Temporary Special Projects Assistant
- On Leave, October, 2020 – March 2021

Jean Price

- Temporary Boutique/Gallery Coordinator (Job-Share)
- October 2020 – March 2021

Alexa Hainsworth

- Member Services Coordinator

Vivian Orr

- Communications and Publications Coordinator (Part-time)
- On leave April-May 2020

Alix Gowan

- Special Projects Assistant (Part-time)
- October 2020-March 2021

Sydney Luther

- Digital Content Coordinator
- On leave April-August 15, 2020

Stephanie Canning

- Exhibitions and Education Coordinator (Job-Share)
- On leave, April 2020-March 2021

Maia Stark

- Exhibitions and Education Coordinator (Job-Share)

Leah Moxley Teigrob

- Temporary Exhibitions and Education Coordinator (Job-Share)
- April 2020-March 2021

CONTRACTED SERVICES

Financial management

- Turkington Business Services,
- **Hannah Turkington**

Professional Practices Coordination

- **Michael Peterson**
- **Laura Helgert**

Building Cleaning

- **Maia Stark**
- **Paul Daniel Siemens**
- **Chiara Tate-Penna**
- **Gabe Penna**

Building Maintenance

- **Paul Daniel Siemens**

MAJOR SPONSORS

CREATIVE SASKATCHEWAN
CITY OF SASKATOON

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

CANADA EMPLOYMENT WAGE SUBSIDY
BROADWAY BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT
SASKATCHEWAN SMALL BUSINESS EMERGENCY
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CARMEN MILENKOVIC
ANNE PARKER
JOHN PEET

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO SUPPORTS THE WORK AND PROGRAMS OF THE SASKATCHEWAN CRAFT COUNCIL. YOUR FINANCIAL SUPPORT HELPS US TO ACHIEVE OUR GOALS.